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Report of the Economic and Social Council

Macroeconomic policy questions: international trade and development; international financial system and development

Sustainable development: implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development; International Strategy for Disaster Reduction; promotion of new and renewable sources of energy, including the implementation of the World Solar Programme 1996-2005

Globalization and interdependence: science and technology for development

Eradication of poverty and other development issues: implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006); human resources development

Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly

Human rights questions: human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security

Human resources management

Letter dated 6 June 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the Doha Declaration on the occasion of the fifth Asia Cooperation Dialogue Ministerial Meeting, held in Doha on 24 May 2006 (see annex).

I would be grateful if you could have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Mutlaq Maged **Al-Qahtani**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

06-38586 (E) 190606

Annex to the letter dated 6 June 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic and English]

DOHA DECLARATION
On the Occasion of the 5th ACD Ministerial Meeting
Doha, Qatar, 24 May 2006

WE, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and other Heads of Delegation from 28 member countries of the ASIA Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), namely the Kingdom of Bahrain; the People's Republic of Bangladesh; the Kingdom of Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam; the Kingdom of Cambodia; the People's Republic of China; the Republic of India; the Republic of Indonesia; the Islamic Republic of Iran; Japan, the Republic of Kazakhstan; the Republic of Korea; the State of Kuwait; the Laos People's Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Mongolia; the Union of Myanmar; the Sultanate of Oman; the Islamic Republic of Pakistan; the Republic of the Philippines; the State of Qatar; the Russian Federation; the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; the Republic of Singapore; the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka; the Kingdom of Thailand; the United Arab Emirates; and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on the occasion of the 5th ACD Ministerial Meeting in Doha, Qatar;

RECALLING the spirit of cooperation and goodwill in which we first came together in Cha-Am, Thailand in 2002 for the inaugural ACD Ministerial Meeting and the success of the Ministerial Meetings held thereafter in Chiang Mai, Thailand in 2003; Qingdao, China in 2004; and Islamabad, Pakistan in 2005;

REAFFIRMING our continuing commitment to the ACD's goals of building a united, strong, competitive and prosperous Asian Community through consolidating Asia's strengths and making use of Asia's diversity for the benefit of the region and its peoples;

REAFFIRMING also our continuing adherence to the ACD's core values, i.e., positive thinking; informality; voluntarism; non-institutionalisation; openness; respect for diversity, the comfort level of member countries and the evolving nature of the ACD process;

PLEDGING to realise the ACD's goals through cooperation and dialogue that adds value to, and does not duplicate, the work already being carried out by other sub-regional and regional fora, thus serving as a missing link in Asia-wide cooperation;

RECOGNISING the ACD to be a unique forum in Asia because of its extensive geographical reach and noble aspirations of making Asia a region on a par with the rest of the world, a united, responsible, constructive, outward-looking and respected player on the world stage;

NOTING with satisfaction the progress that the ACD has made thus far, especially in terms of membership, which has grown rapidly from 18 member countries in 2002 to 28 member countries by 2006; dialogue, regularly conducted at the Ministerial and Senior Officials' levels; and cooperation projects, now covering 19 areas;

COGNIZANT that, as the ACD is entering its 5th year, there is a need that it both retains the features and core values that make it unique as well as promotes a more effective and focused cooperation that yields concrete results and benefits for Asia and its peoples;

PROCEEDING from the Islamabad Declaration adopted by the 4th ACD Ministerial Meeting on 6 April 2005;

DO HEREBY DECLARE:

1. That we agree on the need to advance cooperation under the ACD framework in the areas we believe have the most potential to produce concrete results and benefits within a reasonable time period, and, therefore, concur with the recommendations made in the Report on Conclusions of the Prime and Co-Prime Movers' Consultation; we encourage all member countries to proceed accordingly, aiming to add value to, and not duplicate, work in similar areas being carried out in other fora, especially in
    1.1 Energy: We endorse the establishment of the ACD Energy Forum as the sole platform for energy cooperation under the ACD framework and welcome the 1st ACD Energy Forum held in Bali, Indonesia between 26-28 September 2005 and its outcomes; we welcome Indonesia and the Philippines' offer to coordinate work on drawing up an ACD Energy Action Plan, which should put priority on promoting energy security, research and assessment on energy, energy infrastructure development and encouraging member countries to explore the possibility of re-investing revenues that accrue from the energy trade in the ACD countries to ensure the overall sustainable growth and development of the Asian region; we also support the convening of the 2nd ACD Energy Forum in Pakistan in November 2006, which will be preceded by a workshop on energy security to be hosted by Kazakhstan in October 2006; we welcome Kazakhstan's offer to host the 3rd ACD Energy Forum in 2007 and the Philippines' offer to hold a seminar workshop on renewable energy resources and alternative fuels in mid-2007;
    1.2 Finance: We reiterate the need for Asia to make productive use of its substantial savings, including revenues that accrue from the energy trade, and invest these in the ACD countries for the benefit of the region; we acknowledge that this can be done through the development of the Asian bond market, which will help promote financial stability, long-term sustainable growth and facilitate economic and financial integration; we, therefore, note the outcomes of the High-Level Seminar on "Enhancing Financial Cooperation Through Development of an Asian Bond Market" successfully held between 24-25 March 2006 in Bangkok, Thailand, which will serve as useful substantive inputs for the 1st ACD Finance Ministers' Meeting to be hosted by Thailand; we encourage ACD Finance Ministers to attend the 1st ACD Finance

Ministers' Meeting to be held in Thailand in July 2006 to, among other things, explore the possibility of developing the Asian Bond Market within the ACD context;

1.3 Agriculture: We recognise that priority areas for cooperation include agricultural policy exchange, the transfer of agricultural techniques and technology, sustainable agricultural development and rural education; we, therefore, welcome the progress that has been made in this area under China's leadership and endorse the "Review and Future Proposals on Agricultural Cooperation Under the ACD Framework" paper drafted by China;

1.4 Tourism: We note the outcomes of the 3rd ACD Tourism Business Forum hosted by Cambodia between 24-25 April 2006, which considered the "Road Map for ACD Tourism Cooperation" drafted by Thailand; we endorse the "Road Map" as a basis for member countries to further advance cooperation in this area;

1.5 E-Education: We support the successful implementation of the Asia e-University (AeU) as an instrument for human capacity building, closing the digital divide, increasing access to higher education and spearheading e-education efforts for the benefit of all ACD member countries;

1.6 Environmental Education: We reaffirm ACD member countries' commitment to strengthening ACD cooperation in the area of environmental education through, among other things, sharing best practices and experiences in the effort to promote implementation of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development; we, therefore, welcome the 3rd ACD Dialogue on Environmental Education to be held in Sendai, Japan between 14-15 June 2006 and encourage active participation from member countries in this Dialogue;

1.7 IT Cooperation: We support Korea's and ACD member countries' efforts to continue conducting results-oriented projects in the area of IT by developing mid and long term projects tailored to each country's specific needs and making utmost efforts to ensure complementarity between IT-related projects undertaken in various international fora (e.g., ASEAN+3, ASEM, APEC etc.) and the ACD, among other things, in order to help bridge the digital divide among ACD member countries;

1.8 Natural Disasters: We affirm ACD member countries' potential to develop effective early warning and emergency relief measures and endorse in principle the concept paper on "ACD Cooperation in Early Warning and Emergency Relief" drafted by Russia as the way forward; we encourage all member countries to join efforts in the paper's realization;

1.9 Poverty Alleviation: We encourage ACD member countries to advance cooperation in this area, with emphasis on rural development and the provision of basic social services as well as vulnerable groups (women and children etc.); to this end, we also

encourage member countries to consider establishing a tripartite cooperation model consisting of two ACD developing countries and one international organization or ACD developed country, setting up a network for information-sharing and collection of best practices and mobilising funding from both within and outside the ACD framework;

1.10 Human Resource Development: We recognise the crucial role of human capital in the economic development of Asian countries and encourage ACD member countries to foster cooperation in human resource development; we welcome initiatives to exchange views and share experience and best practices in this area among ACD member countries, with due emphasis on the linkage between human resource development and poverty reduction; in this connection, we take note of the concept paper on "Community Vocational Training Centers for Human Resource Development and Poverty Reduction" drafted by Vietnam as a starting point for cooperation;

1.11 SME Cooperation: We support Sri Lanka's proposal on SME cooperation and efforts made by Singapore in this area and encourage ACD member countries to share experience and best practices to improve SME development, build capacity among SME-related agencies so that they are able to formulate policies and strategies to improve living conditions of the region's people; we also support the hosting of an SME forum in Singapore in 2007 and Sri Lanka in 2008;

1.12 The Chairman proposed that a study be made on the linkages between investment, energy and labour movement in the ACD countries;

2. That we always benefit from a useful exchange of views on regional and global issues of common interest, noting both opportunities for, and challenges facing, Asia and that, in this regard, we reiterate our belief in Asia's growing significance in world affairs, which can positively reinforce multilateralism with the UN at the core and, therefore, endorse the next UN Secretary-General coming from Asia;

3. That we take note of Thailand's offer of cooperation and assistance to ACD member countries as well as other parties facing the avian flu problem in 3 areas, i.e., personnel training and provision of necessary equipment; information-sharing; and provision of support for national pandemic preparedness;

4. That we agree on the need for ACD meetings to produce tangible outcomes and believe that, in order to ensure this, private sector participation in the ACD's activities would be necessary; in this connection, Singapore will enhance private sector participation in the ACD at the above-mentioned SME forum in Singapore;

5. That we discussed the "ASIA Cooperation Dialogue (ACD)Forum: Future Directions" Concept Paper and the "Guidelines for ACD Membership"; in this connection, we agree to set up a small group comprising past, present

and future hosts as well as Thailand, as the Main Coordinator, to give further study to these issues and make concrete recommendations for Ministers' consideration at the 6th ACD Ministerial Meeting to be held in Korea in 2007;

6. That we feel that an appropriate time to convene an ACD Summit in Thailand would be 2008-2009, at which Leaders could also deliberate on the recommendations made by ACD Ministers on, among other things, guidelines for ACD membership and future directions of the ACD;
7. That we welcome among us for the first time at an ACD Ministerial Meeting the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation and the Under-Secretary of the Finance Ministry of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and that we are confident that our new colleagues will make valuable contributions to the ACD;
8. That we agree to accept and welcome Tajikistan and Uzbekistan as the 29th and 30th members of the ACD;
9. That we appreciate the offer previously made, and reiterated, by the Republic of Korea to host the 6th ACD Ministerial Meeting in 2007;
10. That we endorse the offer made by Kazakhstan to host the 7th ACD Meeting in 2008; and
11. That we appreciate the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements of the State of Qatar as host of the 5th ACD Ministerial Meeting.

Adopted on 24 May 2006 in Doha, Qatar.